THE NOBLE LIE.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

NOBLE LIE;

A DRAMA,

IN ONE ACT:

BEING A CONTINUATION OF THE PLAY OF

MISANTHROPY AND REPENTANCE,

OR

The Stranger;

NOW ACTING WITH THE GREATEST APPLAUSE,

AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE,

BY

MARIA GEISWEILER.

London:

PRINTED FOR C. GEISWEILER, 54, PALL-MALL; G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW; J. RICHARDSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE, CORNHILL; AND CARPENTER, & CO. OLD BOND-STREET.

1799.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

[BY THE TRANSLATOR.]

THE play of The Stranger *has been received with ſo much approbation on the Engliſh ſtage, that I am induced to think the Continuation of it will meet with ſome attention. My Tranſlation was firſt begun for the peruſal of a friend; and it is in compliance with the wiſhes of that friend that I have made it public. In a firſt attempt, I am ſenſible perfection of ſtyle is not to be expected; though the thorough knowledge I have of the German language, enables me to ſay with confidence, that I have faithfully given the meaning of the original throughout. To female writers, the Britiſh nation has ever ſhewn great indulgence; and conſcious that I muſt rely more on that indulgence, than on my own merits, I ſubmit myſelf, with ſome hopes of favour, to its judgment, and truſt I ſhall experience that candour which has been ſo often exerciſed towards others.*

PREFACE.

[BY THE AUTHOR.]

THE following ſhort drama owes its birth to the continuation of my play of *Miſanthropy and Repentance*, by Mr. ZIEGLER. I have the higheſt reſpect for the riſing genius of that young author; but believe that the greater part of the ſorrows, which he ſheds ſo plentifully on my poor married pair, proceeds ſolely from not having given them a place of reſidence, far from the ſcorn of mankind, far from their refinements and their ſcandal. Mr. ZIEGLER had certainly a right to continue my play, but not to raiſe people again from the dead, whom I had purpoſely killed, and by that means deſtroy the important circumſtance which, in the forgiveneſs of MEINAU, ſhould never be loſt ſight of.

A. von Kotzebue.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARON MEINAU, *called on the Engliſh ſtage* THE STRANGER.

EULALIA, *called* MRS. HALLER.

WILLIAM, EMILY, } *their Children, about 6 or 7 years old.*

BARON VON DER HORST, *called on the Engliſh ſtage,* STEINFORT.

FRANCIS, *an old Servant.*

ROSE, *a Chambermaid.*

CONRAD, *a Huntſman.*

The Scene, during the whole Repreſentation, on the ſmall Iſland of Meinau, in the Lake of Conſtance, in Switzerland.

THE

NOBLE LIE;

A DRAMA.

SCENE I.

An apartment in the houſe of MEINAU, *with a door in the back of the ſtage, and one on each ſide.—* ROSE *alone, ſinging while ſhe ſweeps and duſts.*

SONG.—*Roſe.*

So neat, ſo clean, all things prepare,
The chamber deck with niceſt care;
But till with cleaner conſcience bleſt,
Remembrance, Roſe, denies thee reſt.

Roſe. (Hearing the clock ſtrike five) Already five o'clock! then my lady will get up directly. Well, I am quite ready for her. O that evening was come, and I had unburthened my heart! Yes—to-day or never. Courage, Roſe! your miſtreſs is ſo good; and your maſter is ſo good—and for that very reaſon, how ſhall I be able to tell them I am not ſo good as themſelves? To confeſs a bad action to a bad perſon would be an eaſy matter; but not to dare to lift up one's eyes to thoſe we are ſpeaking to, is a dreadful ſenſation indeed.

SCENE II.

Conrad. (*Peeping in at the door*) Roſe!

Roſe. Ah Conrad! are you too awake ſo early?

Conrad. So early? Do you then think I have ſlept? *(drawing nearer)* I feel myſelf very queer, Roſe.

Roſe. Softly:—Speak low; our maſter and miſtreſs are ſtill aſleep.

Conrad. Yes, they may well ſleep in each other's arms:—In thy arms, dear Roſe, I could ſleep till doomſday.

Roſe. *(Half crying)* But indeed, Conrad, I am your wife in the eyes of Heaven.

Conrad. *(Half crying alſo)* That you are!

Roſe. And if the parſon does not join us together, death at all events will. Then will I be buried by your ſide—then we ſhall ſleep together—you, and I, and our infant.

Conrad. Yes, Roſe, under the great lime-tree in the church-yard, where the elder peeps over the wall.—*(Pauſe, during which both ſob; Conrad then proceeds)* But don't you think, Roſe, it would be much better not to hurry ſo ſoon to the grave? We might have a good deal of mirth ſtill in the world, and death will catch us at laſt.

Roſe. Certainly.

Conrad. *(Clearing up his countenance)* Think now of half a dozen little flaxen-headed children, jumping about us, and devouring bread and butter,

butter, while you are ſtopping the mouth of the youngeſt with pap.

Roſe. *(Cheerful, and half laughing)* And how in the evening I wait for you on the threſhold of the door, and how the eldeſt boy ſkips about, and cries, "Father is coming! Father is coming!"

Conrad. And how I come in, with my game-bag quite full.

Roſe. And I run to meet you, with a jug of good wine:—

Conrad. And a piece of good old cheeſe:—

Roſe. And how the children gather round you:—

Conrad. And peep into the game-bag:—

Roſe. And help you to undreſs:—

Conrad. And bring me my warm ſocks:—

Roſe. And run about with us in the fields—

Conrad. Tumbling and wreſtling with one another—

Roſe. Till the ſun ſinks behind the Glaciers.

Conrad. Then we all return to our cottage:—

Roſe. And ſay our evening-prayers together:—

Conrad. And ſing a hymn:—

Roſe. And lay ourſelves down comfortably to reſt—

Conrad. In each other's arms:—

Roſe. The young flaxen-heads round about us.

Both. Ha, ha, ha! *(Pauſe)*

Roſe. (*Very melancholy*) But, Conrad, we have got no flaxen-heads.

Conrad. Aye, but Roſe, as we got one—

Roſe

Roſe. No, Conrad, you ſhall not make a fool of me a ſecond time.

Conrad. I mean only, after the parſon has given us his bleſſing.

Roſe. Yes, I mean ſo too.

Conrad. (*Serioufly*) But, Roſe, we have no cottage.

Roſe. Nor milk:—

Conrad. Nor cheeſe:—

Roſe. Nor wine:—

Conrad. Nor beds:—

Roſe. And if we tell how wrong we have acted—

Conrad. And our maſter ſhould turn us both out of doors.

Roſe. Oh dear! Conrad.

Conrad. Oh! Roſe! (*Both ſob. Pauſe.*)

Roſe. (*Sighing deeply*) To-day muſt determine it.

Conrad. Yes, to-day.

Roſe. (*Laying his hand on her heart*) Only feel how my heart beats.

Conrad. (*Doing the ſame*) Mine beats like a hammer.

Roſe. We muſt have done a very bad thing, to have ſuch a beating at our hearts.

Conrad. (*Scratching his head*) We have not done a good thing for certain.

Roſe. But it is not too late to make it good.

Conrad. If our maſter and miſtreſs will but forgive us.

Roſe. I cannot conceive how we came to act ſo.

Conrad.

Conrad. Nor I, truly.

Roſe. I'm ſure I can't. Hark'ee, Conrad, to-day is our maſter's birth-day; every thing will be cheerful and merry; and I have often heard ſay, when people are very merry and pleaſed, they are diſpoſed to be kind and good to every body.

Conrad. Aye, to forgive and to forget.

Roſe. Therefore I will take courage, tell my maſter all, and beg him to intercede for us with our lady.

Conrad. I'm ſure he will; for he is a very good gentleman.

Roſe. And ſhe is a dear good lady.

Conrad. Yes, that ſhe is; God grant her long life! (*Both raiſe their hands to heaven*)

Roſe. Next Sunday we will pray heartily for them.

Conrad. And every Sunday.

Roſe. Do you know what, Conrad; if my maſter ſhould look a little croſs, I will go to that civil ſtranger who arrived late laſt night—

Conrad. To that civil ſtranger!—What do you want wit. him?

Roſe. Why, he is a very good old friend of our maſter's; his name is Horſt, and they ſay he is amazingly fond of him. Old Frank went to meet him as far as the borders of the lake, and brought him quite ſecretly into the houſe, that my maſter ſhould not ſee him till to-day, becauſe it is his birth-day, and they wiſh to agreeably ſurprize

ſurprize him;—I will beg him to intercede for us, as my maſter will not refuſe any thing he aſks. Don't you think it will be a good plan, dear Conrad?

Conrad. (*Scratching his head*) I tell you what, Roſe—now I think more about it—why I think —maſter won't refuſe the ſtranger any thing—the ſtranger will not refuſe you any thing—and you will not refuſe the ſtranger any thing. No! no! that will never do!

Roſe. Ha! ha! ha! (*Laughing*) you are a fool.

Conrad. Yes, I ſhould ſoon be made one this way.

Roſe. Run! run! I think I hear my lady;—and if I remember right, you was ordered laſt night to be on the look-out for game by day-break.

Conrad. Certainly I was.

Roſe. Why are you not gone then?

Conrad. What a ſtupid queſtion! Good b'ye.

Roſe. Adieu!

Conrad. (*Turning back*) Hark'ee Roſe; if you love me, ſay nothing to the ſtranger; you might be troubleſome to him, and that would not be right.

Roſe. Well, well, if it makes you uneaſy—

Conrad. Yes, it does make me uneaſy.

Roſe. Then I'll go and ſpeak to my maſter myſelf.

Conrad. Do ſo. Good b'ye.

Roſe. Adieu! Where are you going?

Conrad. To ſeek for game.

Roſe.

Roſe. (*Laughing*) What! in my maſter's bed-chamber?

Conrad. Humph!

(*He goes off through the front door.*

Roſe. He is a good fellow, and I love him dearly. 'Tis very fooliſh though to be ſo fond—I wonder who firſt found it out—he muſt have been a very clever man!

SCENE III.

EULALIA, *quite dreſſed, but very ſimply, and* ROSE.

Eula. Good morning, Roſe! Go bring my children, and the flowers that lay in the ſummer-houſe. (ROSE *goes out;* EULALIA *then looks out of the window*) A moſt lovely day! Eulalia, be for once cheerful and contented! Forget—if you can forget—that the enjoyment of ſuch a day as this ought only to be the reward of innocence and virtue. O this conſtant thorn in my heart!—this thorn, that ſo tortures me whenever I attempt to gather the ſmalleſt roſebud that blooms in my path. Away, recollection, away! Let not my cheeks for this day bear the marks of a conſcience diſſatisfied with itſelf. This is the birth-day of my beloved huſband! All nature ſmiles around me—the preſent moments are ſo delightful, I can almoſt forget the paſt. (*She goes to one of the ſide doors, and knocks ſoftly.*

Horſt. (*Within*) Who knocks?

Eula-

Eula. 'Tis I, dear Major. It is half paſt five o'clock.—My huſband will be up ſoon.—Are you dreſſed?

SCENE IV.

EULALIA—HORST.

Horſt. (*Opens the door*) Good morning to you, my Lady! I have not ſlept much to night;—the pleaſing ſcenes you yeſterday evening painted to my imagination, though in ſuch haſte, have wandered about in my brain ever ſince.

Eula. I promiſe myſelf much ſatisfaction from your viſit; particularly in the unexpected meeting and embrace of Meinau and his deareſt friend.

Horſt. Do tell me the part which I am to act.

Eula. O, no part at all. You wait a little in your room, and liſten at the door; you will then hear my children meet Meinau, and wiſh him joy and happineſs on this his birth-day: when that is over, and he turns from them a little, you will come out, and immediately embrace him. We ſhall dine in the fields; and in the afternoon have a boat, and row on the lake. In the evening the peaſants will dance on the graſs-plot, and the place be illuminated with torches. Now you are acquainted with the whole affair. But I hear my children. Go, go along. (*She forces him into the chamber*) I feel pleaſed that he is come, and yet his preſence hurts me: the ſight of him reminds

reminds me of Winterſen, and ſharpens every little point that time had blunted. No, I was not born to be a ſinner; that I am ſo I can never reconcile even to my thoughts. It ever appears ſtrange to me; I ſtart at the very idea; and even amidſt the hurry of the moſt pleaſing occupations, where ſorrow often for hours forgets itſelf, it is to me a gnawing worm, which poiſons every enjoyment.

SCENE V.

Old FRANK *leads in the two Children;*—ROSE *brings in a baſket full of flowers and garlands, and retires.*

Both the Children. Good morning to you, deareſt mama! (*They kiſs her hand.*)

Eula. Good morning to you, my children! Good morning to you, Frank! Is every thing in readineſs for the day's amuſement?

Frank. Every thing. O, I have every now and then ſtole a quarter of an hour during the laſt fortnight, to get every thing in order, that nothing might be wanting on this day. You know, my lady, that my maſter ſeldom ſuffers me out of his ſight, having always ſome buſineſs or other to do in the garden or the fields. I have really been obliged to learn to lie and to deceive in my old days, when he ſays, "Well, Frank! where

have you been ſo long?" The reapers and ſhepherds have their orders; the ribbands are divided; the milk-maids will be all dreſſed out to the utmoſt; and I—yes, I will have a dance myſelf to-day!

Eula. So you ſhall, good Frank! we will lead down a dance together.

Frank. Ah! my dear, good lady! *(he ſtoops to kiſs her gown, ſhe reaches out her hand to him)* I never dreamt that we ſhould lead ſuch a delightful life on this little iſland. What a day is this! Oh, for only one ſuch every year, to occupy one's thoughts for the remainder of the twelve months! *(With a reſpectful confidence)*—I have got a ſmall preſent for my maſter, which I ſent for out of my little ſavings—it arrived a few days ago—a meaſure of white rye, from Sweden; he has long wiſhed to make ſome experiments with it.

Eula. You will almoſt raiſe my jealouſy.—Come, children, have you prayed for your father to day?

William. O, yes!

Emily. For both father and mother.

Eula. But know you not, that you muſt to day, being his birth-day, devoutly return thanks to the Almighty, for having given you ſuch a father?—come do ſo now with me. *(She kneels down, both the children with folded hands by her ſide.*

William. We thank thee Almighty God, for having given us ſo good a father!

Emily.

Emily. And pray thee, that thou would'ſt let him live long, very long!

Eula. Hear, O God, the prayers of theſe innocents!—

Frank. (*Much affected*) And grant what they aſk, gracious Father!

(EULALIA *and the children get up.*)

Eula. Now quick! let us put the flowers in order. (*She takes the baſket,*—FRANK *helps her*—*the children jump and ſkip about. The door of* MEINAU'S *bed-room is hung with garlands;*—*a chair is ſet in the middle of the room, and hung with flowers*).

Eula. Now, Frank, creep ſoftly into the room; and let us know when he is awake. (FRANK *goes off*) Now, children, each of you take a large garland of flowers, and preſent it (you know when) to your Father.—

William. O yes! I know very well when.

Eula. You have not forgot your verſes?

Emily. O no! Mamma, will you hear them?

WILLIAM.

"With kindneſs hear your William's lay,"——

Eula. Peace, peace, I believe you.—I think I can hear him moving.

Frank. (*Peeping in at the door*) He is coming.

Eulalia and both the children. He comes! he comes! (*She catches hold of a child in each hand, and approaches the door of the room, in the moment* MEINAU *comes out of it.*)

SCENE.

SCENE VI.

(*All of them ſurround* MEINAU, *and hang about him*) Good morning! good morning!

Meinau. (*Agreeably ſurpriſed*) Why! what is the meaning of all this? (*he ſees the door of his room and the chair ornamented with flowers—and caſts a look at the children*) Deareſt Eulalia, unriddle this!

Eula. (*Sobbing for joy.*) It is your birth-day, deareſt huſband!

Meinau. My birth-day! my dear children! (*He embraces them by turns—they draw him gently to the chair*—WILLIAM *ſtands on one ſide of him, and* EMILY *on the other.*) What are you going to do?

WILLIAM.

With kindneſs hear your William's lay,
Which hails a father's natal day,

EMILY.

With kindneſs hear Emilia's lay,
Which hails a father's natal day.

WILLIAM,

(*Preſenting a garland of flowers.*)

This garland take:—and may thy joy,
Like it e'er bloom, nor cares annoy!

EMILY,

(*Alſo preſenting a garland.*)

This garland take:—and may it prove,
A pleaſing tribute of our love!

BOTH.

BOTH.

(With folded hands and eyes uplifted to heaven.)

Lord of the world! oh! may the prayer
We infants raiſe, thy thoughts employ!
Oh! make this feſtive day thy care—
The mother's and the children's joy.

Frank. (*wiping his eyes*) Amen.

MEINAU *much agitated, ſilently embraces his children, then flies to* EULALIA, *and preſſes her with great warmth to his boſom.*)

SCENE VII.

HORST *comes out of his room and embraces* MEINAU.

Meinau. Good God! Horſt, are you too here?—Deareſt Eulalia, what happineſs have you prepared for me! *(Silently embrace)* Long deareſt Horſt, have you given me the hopes of once more embracing you; but I did not ſo ſoon expect the pleaſure.

Horſt. Nor did I ſo ſoon intend it: two months hence was the time I had myſelf fixed for this journey; but I was under the neceſſity of ſettling all my buſineſs as well as I could, arranging my affairs as well as the hurry would permit: for your dear wife—don't be jealous now—has ſecretly correſponded with me for above half a year, and fixed this day for my coming, becauſe ſhe was in hopes it would add greatly to the happineſs of it. Your old friend grew at laſt ſo vain as to believe it, and here I am at length arrived.

Meinau.

Meinau. Forgive me, my ever-dear friends, if my joy has deprived me of utterance; you have ſo agreeably ſurprized me, you have made me me as weak as a child. Old Frank! (*ſhaking him by the hand*) the tears in your eyes has not eſcaped me. Go, my children, go! leave me a moment alone—Horſt, you muſt remain: 'tis long ſince we ſaw each other; but will you forgive me if I confeſs I have ſeldom miſſed you?

Horſt. We often feel contented without the ſociety of a friend; but the company of a true friend is ſeldom found troubleſome.

Meinau. O no! certainly not.

Eula. If agreeable to you, we will dine in the fields.

Meinau. It cannot but be agreeable.

Eula. Come then, Frank, let us ſpread the table under the three great lime trees.

The Children. (*Jumping*) Pray, dear Mamma, let us help too;—we will all help. (EULALIA, FRANK, *and the Children go out.*

SCENE. VIII.

Meinau. Once more let me ſtrain thee to my heart! thou alone waſt wanting to complete my happineſs.

Horſt. Deareſt Meinau, do I then find in thee my old friend again?

Meinau.

Meinau. My name, and all my ſorrows, I have left behind me in Germany.—Yes brother, I am again the ſame man you knew in Alſace:—Heaven be praiſed! I am more than the ſame.—Did you ever ſee in Alſace tears of joy in my eyes? Look here—theſe are not the firſt I have ſhed in this retirement. (HORST *regards him in ſilence, while inward pleaſure beams on his countenance.*) But, my good Horſt, how have you been during the two years ſince we parted?—You are fall'n away—are grown thin—have you had any misfortune?

Horſt. Aye, aye, it ſo happens in theſe feveriſh times.—In the Eaſt rages the Plague, and with us rages Liberty; from Liberty no one has, in theſe times, grown fat.—We carry the word in our mouths!—On your full cheeks and lively eye the Goddeſs has written her name in pretty legible characters;—why your figure is more animated than ever.

Meinau. I am indeed happy, very happy!

Horſt. Then for once I ſpoke truth, when I ſaid, that by Eulalia's ſide one might venture to dedicate one's life to ſolitude.

Meinau. You indeed ſpoke truth.—In this ſmall iſland, I am a king; in the heart of my wife, I am a king!—more than a king!—for me all is done out of pure love; not one act from duty.—O how very happy are my feelings in ſuch moments! Yes, believe me, joy has much more need of a friend

to

to ſhare its tranſports, than ſorrow. My ſorrow I could lock within my own breaſt:—Not ſo my happineſs—my endleſs happineſs! Brother! where ſhall I begin?—where ſhall I end? A good wife! O God! what more can you beſtow on a man in the life to come, to whom you have given a good wife in this?

Horſt. Delightful ideas!

Meinau. When I awake in the morning, after a tranquil ſleep, I awake with the idea of paſſing a happy day. Eulalia is generally up by this time, and has, during my morning ſlumbers, employed herſelf in managing her little houſhold. When I open the door of my bed-chamber, Eulalia meets me clean and neat, in each hand one of my children, waſhed and dreſſed by her own hands. Formerly, as ſoon as my eyes were open, I peeped through the window, to ſee if the heavens were clear, and if the ſun ſhone:—O! where a good wife is, the ſun always ſhines! When with a ſweet ſmile ſhe comes to meet me, I never perceive the heavens are cloudy and dull, or hear the rain beat againſt my windows. I ſet me down on that ſopha behind the tea-table: by my ſide ſits Eulalia; here William, and there my Emily. We eat, drink, and chat, and as much forget ourſelves as if the whole world was ours, and we were the ſole inhabitants.—O brother! you cannot imagine how I adore every little ſpot around me. Here we ſit, in the long winter even-

ings:

ings: we read, play at chefs, and play with our children, or childiſhly toy with each other. Then how many different thoughts and feelings do we exchange with each other; and I ever find my own ideas reflected in Eulalia, only more delicate and refined.

Horſt. In good truth, Meinau, you ought to read leſſons to all woman-haters.

Meinau. After breakfaſt we go into the fields: for you muſt know I am turned farmer. Old Frank and I are two rigid economiſts. What is written in this paper, we ſend for from Zurich; we read and make trials of them, which often fail moſt ſadly; but many ſucceed, and then we experience much pleaſure. O! I could be a whole day relating to you how we ſtand diſputing about a plan for a new plough, or threſhing machine: when we think we have found it out, we ſet to work carpentering and building; and are ſo very diligent, that we often reckon without our hoſt, and when we have got it completed it turns out good for nothing. We do not fret about it, but begin again, and find new pleaſure. Eulalia often ſtands by the ſide of us with her knitting: laughs or ſmiles, ridicules or praiſes us. O Horſt! Horſt! join our little circle if you really mean to live!

Horſt. That I will, dear brother! that I will!

Meinau. At noon, we partake of a chearful country dinner, prepared by Eulalia's direction, to which every one brings a chearful countenance,

and a good appetite. Little or nothing is ſpoken during the firſt quarter of an hour, for we have enough to do to eat; but in the ſecond, when our good Swiſs cheeſe appears on the table, and my Emily preſents me with a glaſs of wine, our tongues are looſened; and mirth and harmleſs jokes, give a zeſt to the fruits which finiſh our repaſt. Sometimes I examine my children, and enquire what they have learnt--Do you underſtand me, brother--what they have learnt from their mother, for ſhe is their tutoreſs—and I generally find, that of natural hiſtory they know as much as myſelf; and of univerſal hiſtory, even more than myſelf, or they ſurpriſe me with extracts from the beſt German and French authors, which they do not gabble over, for they early learnt the finer feelings of their mother. My Emily begins already to play tolerably well on the harpſichord; and that ſhe derives from her mother—Ah! they derive all from her!--and I find all my bliſs in her! With chains of enchantment has ſhe bound me to a life, which before only hung by a weak thread. I can now think of nothing but to live! live! and thus to live. Bear witneſs, Horſt, how little I uſed to fear death, even amidſt our greateſt pleaſures; but now I tremble at his name.

Horſt. Happy man! God be praiſed that thy warm and generous heart did not miſlead thee!

Meinau. Yes, Horſt, I tremble now at death! it is juſt eight months ſince I had a violent fever, the

the conſequence of a violent cold, caught in hunting. I was ſenſible I was very ill.—Two years before, death to me would have proved a welcome friend, and then---O, Brother! all I have yet related to you, are trifles, when I deſcribe Eulalia to you as a nurſe. Let a man in his happy, healthy days deny the virtues of a wife ever ſo much---let his heart be ever ſo hardened and moroſe---in illneſs the ſoftneſs and mildneſs of a wife will wring from him the confeſſion, that it is not good for man to be alone! When Eulalia ſat by my bedſide---when ſhe never left me; but gave me my medicines, warmed my napkins, or ſmoothed my pillows; when ſhe watched anxiouſly in my pale emaciated looks, either for death or recovery---when a concealed tear betrayed her fears, and a forced ſmile her hopes---when ſhe, with my children, put up a fervent prayer to the Almighty for my recovery--O Brother! thank her then, I could not: for even a ſlight preſſure of the hand was almoſt too much for my weak ſtate, but I was inwardly relieved by it. How it ſtrengthened my mind, and through that, how healingly it worked on my frame! No, I have not words to expreſs it: (*as he wipes off a tear from his eye with his hand, and looks on it*) here it is engraven, (*then points to his heart*) and here!

Horſt. I was certain that it would come to this; I was convinced of it, as I told you for two years, in defiance of what had paſſed.

Meinau

Meinau. (*A little angry*) To what do you recal my attention? Eulalia once in her childhood fell, and retained a ſmall ſcar on her forehead; but Eulalia is ſtill handſome, is ſhe not? The ſcar is worn off, or at leaſt I ſee it no more, and have only eyes for her remaining charms, only feelings for my own happineſs. Yet, Brother, that you may know all, one thing is ſtill wanting, and ſometimes mixes a drop of gall in my honey.

Horſt. And that is?---

Meinau. That Eulalia is not quite ſo happy as myſelf:---that ſhe ſometimes wanders in a melancholy mood:—and that her eyes bear the traces of paſt griefs. This to me is the more painful, as I am acquainted with the cauſe, and dare not ſhare it with her---never dare even aſk, "What is the matter with you, deareſt Eulalia?"---and know of no remedy, no means of ending this never-failing repentance.

Horſt. Perhaps time may---

Meinau. Time! No, Brother, conſcience has no idea of time! She does not feel herſelf on an equality with me; ſhe fancies ſhe has not the ſame right to partake of our pleaſures: every embrace appears to her a forgiveneſs of injuries. Do you not ſee how the poor thing torments herſelf? how ſhe likewiſe torments me? Believe me, if my head aches, I hardly dare wear a ſerious aſpect, for fear her tender mind may conſtrue it into a reproach.

Horſt.

SCENE IX.

To them ROSE, *who has ſlipt into the room, and ſtood trembling for ſeveral minutes.*

Roſe. My Lord!—

Meinau. (*Starts*) What do you want?—Have you been liſtening?

Roſe. O! it would have been much better for for me, if I had always liſtened.

Meinau. Better for you?

Roſe. To liſten to the counſels of fathers and mothers, brings bleſſings.

Meinau. (*Laughing*) Fooliſh girl! Have you then not liſtened to them?

Roſe. Oh no! the more is the pity. I am a poor orphan;--in one week I loſt my parents—next Bartholomew it will be (*She counts with her fingers*) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 years.

Meinau. Well child; but what do you want?

Roſe. Why ſir, to day is your Lordſhip's birth day.—

Meinau. And you are come to wiſh me joy? I thank you.

Roſe. No, I do not merely want to wiſh you joy.

Meinau. (*Laughing*) No? what then? ſorrow?

Roſe. Ah, God forbid! Neither joy or ſorrow —your lordſhip is already ſufficiently happy.

Meinau. You are right, I am indeed.

Roſe.

Roſe. My lord has a good lady, whom he loves, and who loves him; and nobody dare ſay a word about the matter.

Meinau. I cannot conceive what you would be at.

Roſe. (*With downcaſt looks, playing with her apron.*) If Conrad had a wife whom he dared love, he would alſo be very happy.

Meinau. Girl, you chatter away, as if you had not ſlept enough.

Roſe. O yes, I was in this room by five o'clock this morning, and I ſpoke to him here.

Meinau. To whom?

Roſe. (*Stammering*) To Conrad.

Meinau. Ah! I conceive you now,---you are in love?

Roſe. (*Aſhamed*) Yes.

Meinau. And you wiſh to aſk my permiſſion?

Roſe. No.

Meinau. No? what then?

Roſe. Your forgiveneſs; I fell in love without your permiſſion.

Meinau. Well, well, that may be; but Conrad is a young lad, and you are a mere child. You muſt wait.

Roſe. Conrad is not ſo young perhaps as my Lord thinks.

Meinau. No?

Roſe. No, certainly not; and we ſhould not mind waiting, if it was not already too late.

Meinau. Well then, in a couple of years.

Roſe.

Roſe. Ah! that is much too late.

Meinau. Too late?

Roſe. I mean—becauſe we have been ſo fooliſh—and did not wait—and yet ſhould have waited.

Meinau. If I underſtand you right—

Roſe. (*Aſhamed*) I dont know what my Lord underſtands.

Meinau. You are already married?

Roſe. O, no!

Meinau. You want then the parſon's bleſſing ſtill.

Roſe. O, Yes!

Meinau. Let it be ſo.

Roſe. Yes!

Meinau. You have acted very fooliſhly.

Roſe. Yes!

(*Meinau falls into deep thought.*)

Roſe. And I meant—and Conrad meant—becauſe I was a poor orphan—and as to day was my Lord's birth-day—and my Lord would not take it ſo much amiſs to day, and ſpeak a good word for us to our Lady—that ſhe may not turn me out of doors (*crying*) becauſe I—becauſe I ſhould ſtarve—and the poor little infant too—and becauſe I muſt drown myſelf—and the poor little infant too. (*When ſhe ſees that* MEINAU *no longer liſtens to her, ſhe turns in great anxiety to* HORST.) Ah, dear Sir! Old Frank ſays, that you are a mighty good friend of our Lord's, and that he loves you very dearly; do ſpeak one word for me, and I will love you dearly too!

Horſt.

Horſt. With all my heart, my pretty girl.—Well, Meinau, I hope you will forgive dame Nature for playing one of her old tricks.

Meinau. (*Drawing* HORST *on one ſide.*) Did I not tell you a few moments back, that Eulalia did not feel herſelf on an equality with me, and that that was the cauſe of her melancholy?

Horſt. How came you to think of that, now?

Meinau. Hear me, Roſe! you ſhall be forgiven, and I will portion you—and give you to Conrad for a wife; but on one condition:—

Roſe. (*Will kiſs his hands*) Ah! dear, good Sir!

Meinau. Hold! hold! on one condition, I ſaid.

Roſe. With pleaſure, on any condition; if I am only Conrad's wife.

Meinau. Go this moment to my wife. Confeſs to her what you have confeſſed to me; only name me inſtead of Conrad!

Roſe. (*In aſtoniſhment*) How?

Horſt. Meinau! are you mad?

Meinau. Leave me alone.—Well Roſe do you underſtand me?

Roſe. As I am an honeſt girl, I do not underſtand you.

Meinau. You ſhall tell my wife, you have been ſeduced by me.

Roſe. Good God!—Why I cannot marry you my Lord.

Meinau.

Meinau. Fool! that is not the queſtion: you ſhall marry your Conrad: you ſhall only pretend it, I ſay.

Roſe. But then it would be a Lie?

Horſt. (*Aſide*) A NOBLE LIE!

Meinau. The ſin I take on myſelf.

Roſe. To be ſure, my lord will have greater weight with God, than ſuch a poor orphan as I;—but will not my Lady be much vex'd?

Meinau. That is my affair.—Well! will you or not? either you tell a lie, and are Conrad's wife; or you tell the truth, and are turn'd out of doors; take your choice!—

Roſe. Why, if I was to have the lie to anſwer for, I would much rather ſpeak the truth; but, as my lord will take the ſin on himſelf—why e'en let it be ſo.

Meinau. Well then! do you give Conrad his leſſon, that he does not babble.—Well, Horſt, what is your opinion? This, I ſhould think, will give her equality and peace again.

Horſt. Strange mortal!---Your intention is good, but you only exchange one thorn for another; and you know little of women, if you believe the laſt wounds leſs painful than the former.

Meinau. Not ſo, you woman-hater! I know Eulalia, and know what I am about. Come, go with me into the fields, that we may get out of

her way, and give the girl time to tell her ſtory. (*To* Rose) Manage the matter right, and in eight days you ſhall have your wedding.

(*Exit with* Horst.

SCENE X.

Rose *alone.*

Roſe. My wedding in eight days?---Ha, ha, ha! Aye, to-morrow, if it depended on myſelf!--- But my Lord is certainly very ſtrange on his birth-day.---He muſt certainly have a terrible deſire to quarrel with my Lady, that he inſiſts on my ſetting her againſt him.---She will certainly diſtreſs herſelf very much---and ſhe is ſo good--- Ah! I muſt then tell all.---God forbid!---what then will become of the wedding? He muſt himſelf ſee how he can make it up with her again.

SCENE XI.

Conrad *comes in trembling.*

Roſe. (*Flies to meet him*) Conrad! what will you give me for my good news?

Conrad. Out with it, deareſt Roſe! for this laſt hour I have been nearly choaked. I wanted to go hunting; but I was fairly pulled back again.

Roſe.

Roſe. Poor fellow!

Conrad. I have yet my breakfaſt in my pocket ---not a bit could I ſwallow.

Roſe. Well, you'll like the wedding-cake the better.

Conrad. The wedding-cake?

Roſe. What faces he makes! Does your mouth water?

Conrad. Not merely after the cake.

Roſe. But after the wedding?

Conrad. Aye, certainly: but do ſpeak now, Roſe;---are you in earneſt.

Roſe. Yes, yes, yes!---it is indeed real earneſt. My maſter is juſt gone away, and I have ſpoken to him here.

Conrad. What! after he was gone?

Roſe. Stupid boy! While he was here.

Conrad. Come, don't ſcold now!

Roſe. Obſerve now:—Here ſtood my lord;—and here ſtood the ſtrange gentleman;—and here I ſtood.

Conrad. Was the ſtranger here too?

Roſe. Yes, and he called me a pretty girl.

Conrad. Pretty girl? Well! well!

Roſe. And talked about a great many things I did not underſtand.

Conrad. About many things?—Aye, aye! let's hear about thoſe many things.

Roſe. For example—he ſpoke of nature, and that it had played a trick.

Conrad.

Conrad. Of nature? *(he ſets his arms a-kimbo)* only hear now! What did he mean by that?

Roſe. That I cannot tell.

Conrad. Yes, yes, I perceive it very well; but *(ſhaking his fiſt at her)* I tell you, Roſe, I will not ſuffer it!

Roſe. What will you not ſuffer?

Conrad. That—nature ſhould play tricks.

Roſe. Don't, dear Conrad, be ſo ridiculous:---nature ſhall do you no harm. The ſhort and the long is---my lord has forgiven us, and promiſed to portion me, and in eight days the wedding is to take place---but on one condition---

Conrad. On one condition? Let's hear it.

Roſe I am to play my lady a trick. Ha, ha, ha!

Conrad. To play her a trick?

Roſe. Yes; do you underſtand me?---I am to impoſe on her, and you are always to ſay yes to it.

Conrad. Nothing but yes?

Roſe. Nothing at all elſe.

Conrad. Speak on! What is it I am to ſay yes to?

Roſe. Softly, ſoftly! I hear my lady on the ſtairs. Only let me manage it, Conrad; in the mean time, you may ſtand in that corner, and liſten to us, and not ſpeak one word till you are ſpoke to, and when you are aſked a queſtion always ſay, yes.

Conrad. (*Placing himſelf in the corner, near the door*) This is a curious buſineſs.

SCENE

SCENE XII.

EULALIA—THE FOREGOING.

Conrad makes her a very low bow as ſhe comes in, and during the firſt part of the ſcene, plays with his hat.

Eulalia. Why, Roſe, you are generally officious enough; how comes it to day, that I muſt ſearch for you?

Roſe. (*Sighs deeply.*

Conrad. (*Sighs alſo.*)

Eulalia. Do you ſigh?—and you too, Conrad?

Conrad. (*Bows*) Yes.

Eulalia. For what reaſon?

Conrad. Only aſk Roſe.

Eulalia. (*To Roſe*) Speak without fear; you know very well I am no bug-bear.

Roſe. Ah! it has long lain on my conſcience. But I loved my lady ſo much that I did not like to tell her, becauſe it would grieve her, and ſhe would not like me any more—But, Oh God! I cannot conceal it any longer.

Eulalia. What is it?

Roſe. (*Crying*)I--I have been ſeduced.

Eulalia. You? Poor little thing! and who is your ſeducer?---does he ſtand there in the corner.

Conrad. (*Makes a low bow*) yes.

Roſe. No; it is not him: he is only to be my huſband.

Eulalia.

Eulalia. Only to be your huſband? Is that true, Conrad?

Conrad. Yes.

Eulalia. Now, Roſe, may I know the name of your ſeducer?

Roſe. Ah! my lady will be very angry.

Eulalia. Why more than I am at preſent? Why ſhould I wiſh to know the name of your ſeducer, but on your own account? It is to have you redreſſed I wiſh to know it.

Roſe. (Stammering)--My—my Lord!

Eulalia. What has he to do with the buſineſs?

Roſe. O it is him!—He is my ſeducer!

Eulalia. (Starts violently—and after a pauſe, in which her countenance betrays emotions of various ſorts, ſhe ſays in a firm voice) Thou lieſt.

Roſe. No, No;—it is true: my lord told me ſo himſelf. *(Again a pauſe.---It is left to the actreſs to make the moſt of this ſituation).*

Eulalia. Is it true? It cannot be true! and yet the girl is too ſimple to tell ſuch a wicked lie--or indeed any lie.---Why do I tremble?---it has ſo ſuddenly ſurprized me---the ſituation is ſo new to me---how ought a good wife to conduct herſelf?--how muſt Eulalia conduct herſelf? O! for one ſolitary hour, to calm my heart, and reconcile me to myſelf. Shall I enquire deeper into this ſecret?---ſhall I ſearch into circumſtances and leading occurrences?--No, no! it is ſo!--let be ſo!--What, tears?---do you come?---why do you flow

flow?---I know not myſelf, what my feelings are, (*To* Rose.) And you ſay your maſter will marry you to Conrad.

Roſe. Yes, to Conrad, if my lady will give leave.

Eulalia. O I give you leave, and you ſhall remain with me—I will have your child brought up—I will bring it up myſelf.

Conrad. (*Who has ſhewn great uneaſineſs and impatience, during this falſe diſcovery, now breaks out at once*) No! Roſe, no; it will not do: the Devil may ſay yes for me.

Roſe. Do but be quiet, you fool: my lord takes it all on himſelf, in this world and the next.

Conrad. Aye, your humble ſervant! I am the child of honeſt people, and am myſelf an honeſt lad—I will not ſuffer it.

Eulalia. What is the matter with you?

Conrad. Fye, Roſe! that you can thus bear to ſee how our good lady cries.

Eulalia. (*Forcing a ſmile*) Are you dreaming? Why ſhould I cry? I have long known what has happened: your maſter informed me of it himſelf: it is very natural: I only pretended ignorance, to try if Roſe would tell me the truth.

Conrad. No, my Lady, (*ſpeaking with reſpect*) it is not true; becauſe my Lord could not have told you, and becauſe Roſe, give me leave to ſay, has told a lie. Yes, you may twitch me and wink at me. A lie is neither now or ever good

for

for any thing; and this lie is one of the worſt I ever heard in my life. Only think now, does the girl imagine I would marry her, if there remained a chriſtian ſoul on earth that could believe (*angrily and contemptuouſly*) I would ſerve her for a ſcreen? Fie!—Conrad is poor, but poverty and honor often lodge under the ſame roof.

Roſe. Well, dear Conrad, if you will have it ſo, ſo let it be; only don't be angry.

Conrad. Marry! this would make a vulture out of a pigeon!

Eula. Children, do ſpeak plain; I cannot conceive what you mean.

Conrad. Why, then ſhe has told lies.—I—I alone have been guilty in this ſtupid buſineſs; and if my lord and my lady will give leave, I will make all the amends I can.

Eula. (*To* Rose.) You have lied then?

Roſe. Yes.

Eula. Are you not aſhamed to calumniate your good maſter in this manner? Fye, fye, I did not think you could have done ſo.

Roſe. My maſter ordered me to do ſo himſelf.

Eula. Ordered you himſelf?

Roſe. Yes, he ſaid that only on that condition I ſhould be married to Conrad in eight days.

Eula. (*After a pauſe, awakes as out of a dream.*) Ha! I now conceive you, noble man! (*her tears break forth*) I conceive and feel your reaſons for acting in this manner.—Go, children, go! leave me alone.

Roſe.

Roſe. But—my maſter will now be very angry with me.

Eula. I will ſet that all to rights; go! Sunday is your wedding-day.

Both. (*Kiſſing her hand*) Sunday?

Roſe. O the dear good lady!

Conrad. Huzza, Roſe! (*They run off arm in arm.*

SCENE XIII.

EULALIA—*alone.*

What is come to me!—I can yet neither think nor feel; one ſenſation deſtroys the other. Ha! this Noble Lie! this voluntary humiliation to make me think he alſo has ſinned: becauſe he knows how much lighter the poor ſinner carries his burthen, when his neighbour carries one alſo—O yes! it is generous, noble! but—confeſs, Eulalia,—are you not better pleaſed that it is only a lye?

SCENE XIV.

MEINAU—HORST—EULALIA.

Eula. (*Flies to* MEINAU *and fervently embraces him*) O Meinau! dear, noble Meinau!

Meinau. (*Checks her embrace*) What is the matter with you, Eulalia? from whence proceed theſe fiery tranſports of your tenderneſs?

Eula. Read my thanks in theſe tears.

Meinau. Thanks? for what?

Eula. Roſe has been with me.

Meinau. (Pretends to ſtart) Roſe?

Eula. O ſtart not, dear Meinau! do not turn actor on my account; I know all.

Meinau. What do you know?

Eula. The generous falſhood of my noble huſband.

Meinau. (Starts in earneſt) The ſtupid thing!

Eula. It was not Roſe, dear Meinau, but Conrad, that brave lad, who felt his honor hurt, and would not ſay yes, to the ſtrange intention of your noble mindedneſs.—O I thank you for your love! but leave to Heaven its juſtice; I cannot—dare not be quite happy! and was it otherwiſe, what would virtue be! if I have by inward repentance and contrition made ſome atonement, I have been rewarded for it.—Without, every thing ſmiles around me, I have one enemy alone, and that I carry within me. That the Almighty ſhould attach to a perfect conſcience alone, perfect happineſs, is juſt and right! how dare I murmur?—Be ſatisfied, my beloved! I am as happy as I ought to be; and when on my deathbed, my huſband and my children will bear me witneſs, that I have never forgotten my duty, ſince that unhappy hour.—Then, perhaps, a merciful judge will ſtrike out from the record of my life, the day in which I became a guilty being: till then, deareſt Meinau, let us be as happy

happy as before; and, when you perceive a little cloud on my brow, look another way, and appear not as if you noticed it.

Meinau. (*Claſps her to his breaſt tenderly, but with melancholy*) Can Eulalia make me ſo perfectly happy—and will not?

Eula. She will—ſhe could once—She cannot!

Horſt. You are perfectly happy, dear Meinau; and you too, Eulalia. That friend who loves you as his brother and ſiſter, ſees it with tranſports of pleaſure. I will never part from you more. In my commiſſion I will roll up flower-ſeeds; and hang my order and croſs on the next oak.—Receive me amongſt you; let me remain with you, till I become an old bachelor. I will ſow and plant with Meinau, chatter with Eulalia, and play with your children.

Meinau. (*Shakes him by the hand*) I take you at your word, dear Horſt! but one thing is wanting yet—You muſt look out for a good wife.

Horſt. (*Puts his hand on his ſword*) This was my wife: (*He takes off his ſword and lays it on the table*) I divorce myſelf from it, and fly into your arms! (*All three embrace.*)

The curtain drops.

THE END.

CONSTANTINE GEISWEILER,

No. 54, PALL-MALL;

RESPECTFULLY informs the Nobility, Gentry, and others, Amateurs of foreign Literature, that he has opened a Shop as above, for the Sale of German, French, and Italian Books, and that from the Communications he has eſtabliſhed with the various parts of the Continent, he ſhall be able to execute all Orders for foreign Books with the greateſt Expedition.

He has alſo on Sale, a Collection of Engliſh Books, and ſupplies all new Publications.

N. B. Book binding executed in the different Styles of Neatneſs and Elegance.

Just published, by C. GEISWEILER,

THREE LETTERS TO A NOBLE LORD,

ON THE

PROJECTED LEGISLATIVE UNION

Between GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND; considered with Reſpect to its Influence on the Legislation, Commerce, and Morals of the latter.

BY A NOBLEMAN.

4 AP 54

Of whom also may be had,

Philoſophical Diſſertations on the Egyptians and Chineſe:

Translated from the French of Mr. DE PAUW, Private Reader to FREDERIC II. King of Prussia. With Additions.

By Capt. J. THOMSON.

D'Anville's Maps of Egypt sold separate, 6d.

Also in the Press, and speedily will be published,

POVERTY and NOBLENESS of MIND;

A DRAMA,

IN THREE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE:

BY MARIA GEISWEILER.